



U.S. Immigration
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News Release

Fourteen charged as U.S. and Canada charged as U.S. Canada dismantle major human smuggling network

Ring suspected of bringing Indian and Pakistani nationals into the U.S. through Canada

BLAINE, Wash. – Following two parallel investigations, U.S. and Canadian authorities today announced the break up of a far-reaching human smuggling network suspected of illegally bringing dozens of Indian and Pakistani nationals across the international border into Washington state.

The initial results of the year-long investigations were unveiled today by representatives from the United States Attorney's Office, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol.

So far, a federal grand jury in Seattle has indicted 14 U.S. and Canadian residents for their role in the scheme. Kavel Multani, is a dual Canadian and Indian citizen who allegedly oversaw the Vancouver, Canada-based smuggling ring. Multani, 46, is named in the federal indictment unsealed today charging him with nine counts of smuggling and transporting illegal aliens. Multani was taken into custody yesterday by the RCMP along with three other alleged members of the smuggling ring, Nizar Sabaz-Ali, 38, Sandip Parhar, 26, and Armardeep Singh Powar, 23.

ICE and RCMP investigators allege Multani oversaw a criminal network that charged foreign nationals from India and Pakistan up to \$20,000 to \$35,000 each for passage through Canada into the United States. Yesterday, authorities served search warrants on Multani's home and another residence in Surrey. Four people found in these houses, who were in Canada illegally, were taken into custody.

Infrared images captured by CBP Border Patrol surveillance cameras show some of the aliens aided by the ring being escorted across the border in a remote area of the state. Once they reached the United States, the smuggled aliens were often transported to area hotels, where they waited until the defendants arranged for outbound airline flights to cities throughout the United States.

"Border security is critical for both the U.S. and Canada," stated United States Attorney John McKay. "Human smugglers prey on those who are seeking a better life, and potentially expose us to

terrorist incursions. The leaders of smuggling rings not only victimize those willing to pay them, they undermine the security of both our countries.”

The smuggling group first came to the attention of U.S. law enforcement in January 2005, after CBP Border Patrol in eastern Washington received a tip about three men in the Oroville area who had purchased maps of the border and inquired about local Border Patrol and RCMP enforcement activities. Several days later, Border Patrol agents intercepted a minivan carrying 10 illegal aliens near the Oroville port of entry. Inside the minivan, which was registered to Multani, agents encountered two of the suspects, Sandip Parhar, 26, and an unnamed defendant.

“This case represents a model for binational cooperation and my Canadian counterparts should be commended for their extraordinary efforts,” said Leigh Winchell, special agent in charge of ICE investigations in Seattle. “The information sharing among the agencies involved sends a clear message that we will not allow our international border to be a barrier to combating human smuggling and bringing criminals to justice.”

“This type of cooperative effort between Canadian and American law enforcement agencies demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that our shared border remains closed to criminal activity,” said Chief Superintendent Bud Mercer, Royal Canadian Mounted Police. “The RCMP looks forward to continued cooperation with our American partners to ensure the interests of both countries are respected and our borders remain secure.”

“The efforts of the participating law enforcement officers throughout these investigations exemplify the fine spirit of cooperation that exists between our respective agencies and contributed greatly to the arrests this week,” said Ron Henley, chief patrol agent for the Blaine Border Patrol Sector. “The Border Patrol is proud to have done its part in bringing an end to this smuggling enterprise.”

Those arrested so far in the investigation are:

- Kavel Multani, 46, Vancouver, Canada; dual Canadian and Indian citizen, the alleged ring-leader of the scheme;
- Sandip Parhar, 26, Delta, British Columbia; Canadian;
- Armardeep Singh Powar, 23, Vancouver, Canada; Indian;
- Raman Pathania, 19, Surrey, British Columbia; Indian;
- Nizar Sabaz-Ali, 38, North York, Ontario; Pakistani;
- Anthony Maclean, 21, Richmond, British Columbia; Canadian;
- Jatinder Brar, 19, Surrey, British Columbia; Canadian;
- Sukveer Sandhu, 18, Surrey, British Columbia; Canadian;
- Matthew Dehagi, 35, Port Coquitlam, British Columbia; Canadian;
- Harjeevan Parhar, 23, Surrey, British Columbia; Indian;
- Harminder Singh, 37, Kent, Washington; Indian;

Three other suspects have been indicted and are being sought by law enforcement.

ICE